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## Author and Illustrator Matthew Cordell '97 Wins Caldecott Award for "Wolf in the Snow"

Winthrop University

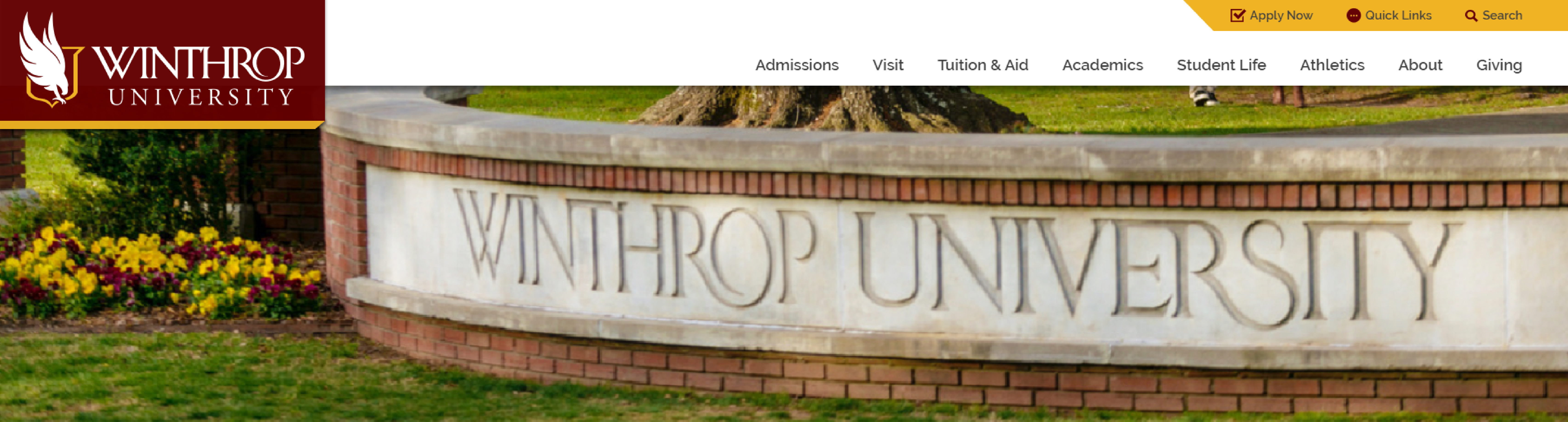
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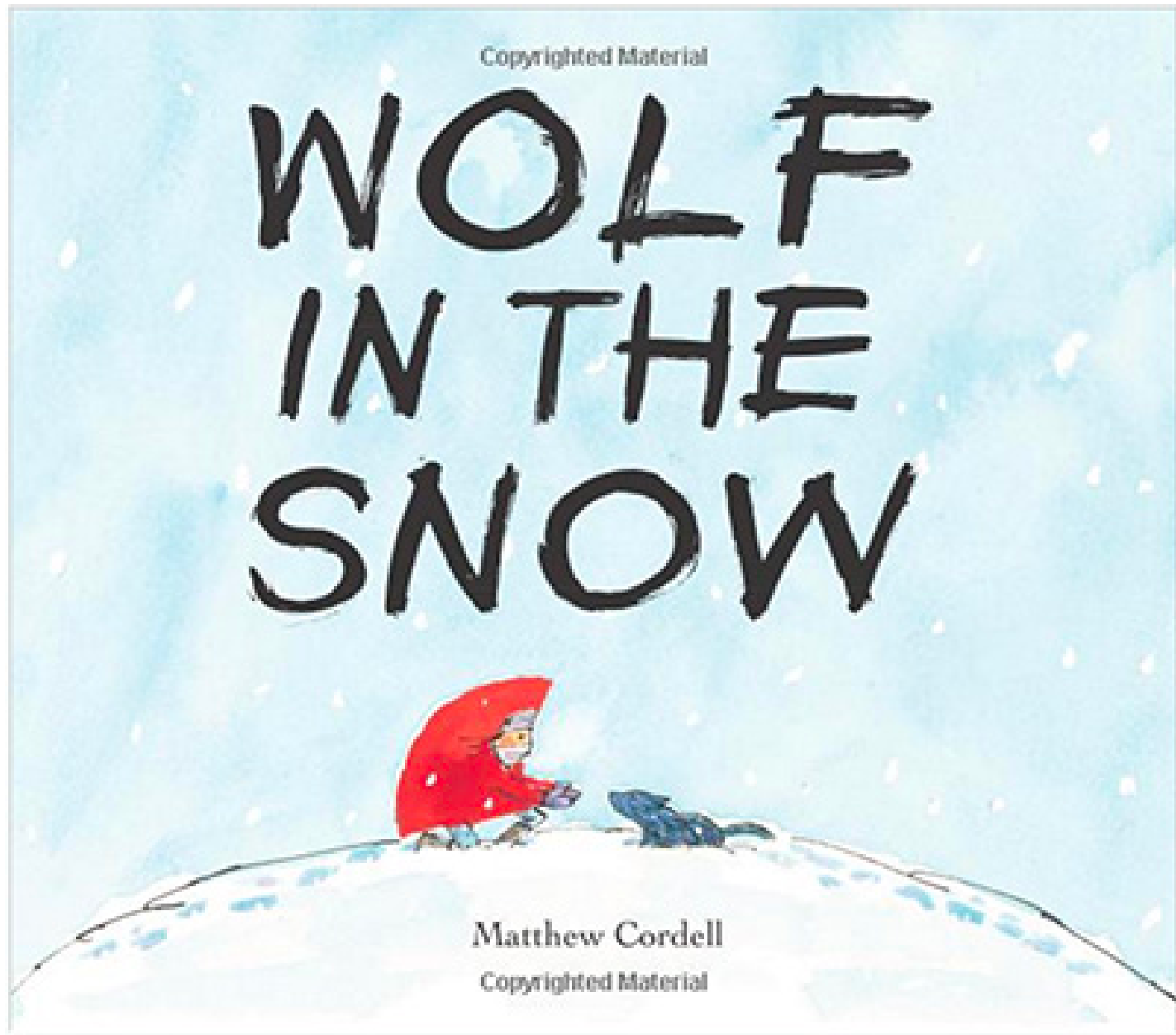
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## Author and Illustrator Matthew Cordell '97 Wins Caldecott Award for "Wolf in the Snow"

February 15, 2018

### Quick Facts

- Since 1937, the Caldecott Medal has recognized the year's most distinguished American picture book for children
- "Wolf in the Snow," which also won a 2017 Boston Globe-Horn Book Award, is a wordless picture book about two different entities who "historically don't understand each other and are put in a situation where they are forced to trust each other."



ROCK HILL, SOUTH CAROLINA — Winthrop University alumnus **Matthew Cordell '97** was recognized on Feb. 12 with the prestigious **Caldecott Award** by the **American Library Association** for his book **"Wolf in the Snow."** Since 1937, the award has recognized the year's most distinguished American picture book for children.

In the weeks leading up to the announcement, Cordell tried not to get his hopes up about the award, but couldn't help think: what if?

"It's not like the Oscars or the GRAMMYs where you get nominated so you know whether or not you have a shot beforehand," Cordell said. "It's this unpredictable and elusive thing, and you don't know until it's announced. That's part of what makes it so exciting."

"Wolf in the Snow," which also won a 2017 Boston Globe-Horn Book Award, is a wordless picture book about two different entities who "historically don't understand each other and are put in a situation where they are forced to trust each other." Cordell said that this story is something we can all learn from in today's world and believes it's part of the reason for the book's recognition.

"There's a lot of destruction and prejudice amongst people, and we're living in a time that's saturated in negativity," Cordell said. "The underlying message of the book speaks to the time we are living in."

Since the announcement, Cordell has been inundated with messages from friends, family and strangers all over the country. Teachers and librarians have taken to Twitter to express their excitement about the award.

"They have been filming their students watching the live announcement, and they post these little 15-second video clips with the kids going nuts and it gives me chills every time," Cordell said. "I love kids and spending time with them. To see their unbridled enthusiasm is awesome. At the end of the day, that's the best part for me."

In 2017, the Winthrop University Galleries featured Cordell's work in an exhibition entitled "pen & ink" that included early sketches, works in progress and completed books. Along with the exhibition, Cordell visited Winthrop to talk with students in hopes to give back to the institution that gave him so much.

"When I was a student, one of the things that always made an impression on me was to see working professionals succeeding in what I wanted to do," Cordell said. "I'm thankful that Winthrop invited me back and that I could be that for someone else and show the trajectory of my career."

Cordell hopes that speaking to the students encouraged them to pursue their dreams, just as he experienced while a student at Winthrop.

"As a student, I think it's comforting to see that it's possible," Cordell said. "If you work hard and commit, you can really achieve in ways you never expected."

In addition to "Wolf in the Snow," Cordell has written and illustrated other children's books, including "Wish," "Dream," "hello! hello!" "Another Brother" and "Trouble Gum."

For more information, contact **Whitney Hough**, director of communications and community engagement for the **College of Visual and Performing Arts**, at 803/323-2399 or [houghw@winthrop.edu](mailto:houghw@winthrop.edu), or visit the website at [www.winthrop.edu/arts](http://www.winthrop.edu/arts).

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